

but it is certain that for seven or eight months of the year the Giraffes of the North Kalahari and other waterless regions can never touch water.

As to procuring living specimens :—

The Chief Khama of Bamangwato is (I speak from personal experience) so enlightened, so obliging, and so disposed to assist Europeans, and especially English people, in every possible way, that I am quite certain arrangements might be made with him for obtaining living specimens of the young of the Giraffe. Much of Khama's territory is the stronghold of this rare and singular creature, and in all his country the chief has implicit obedience from his vassals and tributaries. The Masarwa Bushmen of the North Kalahari and Botletli River regions, assisted by Khama's own mounted hunters, could spoor and catch the young of Giraffe, which could then be brought to Khama's town of Palachwe. From Palachwe to Vryburg, British Bechuanaland (420 miles), is but 20 days' journey, even by the slow-moving ox-waggon. From Vryburg to Cape Town the journey now occupies by rail two days and nights only. I know of no other part of Africa more accessible for the purpose I speak of, certainly no other where the willing services of an all-powerful chief such as Khama could be enlisted. In North Africa Giraffes have now very far to be sought, farther, I should say, even than in Khama's country. In East Africa the co-operation of native chiefs and hunters would be very hard to secure.

After Khama's time, the Giraffe, which he now to some extent preserves, will shortly be exterminated, and it will then be too late. I urge therefore upon all European collectors not to let slip the opportunity I have indicated.

## 6. Notes on some Reptiles from Trinidad.

By R. R. MOLE and F. W. URICH<sup>1</sup>.

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### 1. THE TREE-BOA (*Xiphosoma hortulanum*).

This Snake is comparatively common in Trinidad, principally in the locality of streams. Locally it is known as the "Cascabel Dormillon," which means "sleeping Rattlesnake." It is invariably found in the daytime rolled up in loose folds among the twigs of a tree the branches of which overhang a stream. When disturbed it does not, as a rule, try to escape, but launches out at the aggressor with widely distended jaws. At night these Snakes are lively and glide from bough to bough in search of small birds, squirrels, and porcupine-rats, which constitute their principal food.

The female of a pair of these Cascabels, caught by Mr. G. R.

<sup>1</sup> Received from Messrs. Mole and Urich along with living specimens of the Reptiles noticed. The scientific names have been kindly determined by Mr. G. A. Boulenger.—P. L. S.

O'Reilly in February 1890, in the act of copulating, and kept in his collection, gave birth to a large litter of young ones, between 20 or 30, in the following August. The young Cascabels, which are very small and thin with enormous heads, immediately display all the habits of the adult snake, coiling in the branches and being ever ready to bite fiercely. They feed upon lizards and mice, which they kill by constriction. We have noticed they hold their prey a long time after its death, and that after swallowing one victim they will not feed again until it is thoroughly digested, a habit in which they differ from other snakes of the Boa family, especially from *Epicrates cenchris* and *Boa constrictor*.

## 2. THE TIGRE SNAKE (*Spilotes variabilis*).

This large black Snake with pale yellow markings is known in Trinidad as the Tigre or Tiger. It has the reputation of being very fierce, but our experience, as gained by this specimen, is the reverse, as it permits itself to be handled with impunity. The Tigres are difficult to feed, but this one may be induced to eat young birds and young rats. It is very rapid in its movements, and is found in trees as well as on the ground. There is a larger variety entirely black, which is known as "the widow." The Tigres and Machetes, with many other colubrine snakes in Trinidad, have a very curious habit of agitating the tail with great rapidity when excited, producing a sharp tapping sound as if imitating the Mapepi (*Lachesis mutus*) and Rattlesnake.

## 3. THE MACHETE SNAKE (*Herpetodryas carinatus*).

This bright gold and bronze green Snake is known in Trinidad as the Machete or Macheta, because the male's back being ridged is thought to bear some resemblance to a machete or cutlass. It is an exceedingly swift snake, and is found in all kinds of situations, but chiefly on trees. It swims well. This specimen was first seen hanging by its tail from the topmost branch of a bush on a river-bank. When in captivity they are fond of climbing and resting on a large branch. This specimen laid five eggs, each about two inches long and as thick as the little finger. The Machete bites furiously when caught. It feeds on frogs principally, but will also eat young birds and lizards. There are several varieties in Trinidad, one of a beautiful green, but it is rarer than this kind.

## 4. THE PLICA LIZARD (*Uraniscodon plica*).

These Lizards, for which we have not found a generally accepted Creole name, have a very curious appearance. They are essentially tree- and wall-lizards, and apparently never seek the earth unless forced to do so. When they are chased and fall by accident to the ground, they are awkward and evidently unused to such a situation and are easily caught. They are found in colonies of six, eight, or even a dozen individuals on the trunks (rarely the branches) of large trees and on the rough stone walls of bridges, ruins and old houses,

usually head downwards, but in whatever position they may be the head and fore part of the body is raised. They scramble about very quickly, but like all lizards soon exhaust themselves and can then be easily taken. They permit persons to approach near to them when first discovered, but soon become alarmed. When on trees, like squirrels and woodpeckers, they have a habit of placing themselves on the opposite side to the one in view. They live on spiders, beetles, and caterpillars, and in captivity eat cockroaches with avidity, managing sometimes to swallow very large ones. In confinement they have laid cylindrical-shaped eggs an inch long, covered with tough, white, slightly ribbed, parchment-like skin.

7. Additional Notes upon *Hapalemur griseus*. By FRANK E. BEDDARD, M.A., Prosector to the Society.

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In the 'Proceedings' of this Society for 1884 (p. 391 *et seqq.*) I published a few notes upon the external characters and visceral anatomy of *Hapalemur griseus*. Since that date I have had the opportunity of dissecting two other examples of this Lemur, and am able to supplement my former paper with some account of the brain and the muscular system. Unfortunately both these individuals were, like the one which I first dissected, males. It is very desirable that the condition of the patch of modified integument upon the arms, so characteristic a feature of this animal, should be figured in the female. It was first figured for the male *Hapalemur griseus* by myself, and subsequently by Mr. Bland Sutton<sup>1</sup>; but although Mr. Sutton's figure supplemented my own in directing attention to a tuft of long hairs, overlooked by myself, in the neighbourhood of the patch of spines, we both of us omitted to observe one detail which will be noticed in the accompanying drawing (fig. 1, p. 450). In the specimen before me the patch of spines is very well and equally developed upon both arms; it extends down as far as the naked skin of the palm of the hand, being thus more extensive than in the former examples figured by myself and by Mr. Sutton; towards the middle of the patch the spines were distinctly longer than elsewhere; to the outside of the patch, on both arms there was a smallish oval tract of thick skin like one of the pads on the palm of the hand, with lines running transversely to its long axis. Both I myself and Mr. Sutton had failed to notice this callous pad. On re-examining the skin of the individual which I first dissected, I have found indications of this pad, which is, however, not at all clear in the dried skin. I fancy that it must also have been inconspicuous before the skin was removed; it is so plain in the specimen before me, that I cannot understand having

<sup>1</sup> "On the Arm-gland of Lemurs," P. Z. S. 1887, p. 391. See also Journ. of Comp. Med. and Surgery, vol. viii. p. 22.